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This month's focus: College Preparation



"We must make sure that every student has access to high quality teaching and a quality curriculum that prepares them for post-secondary education. As researchers, we play a critical role by examining policies and practices that contribute to students' success or failure. Together, the future is in our hands."

- Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, IDRA President and CEO

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Plus online tools:

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- Report: IDRA's Ready Texas Study
- Infographic: Ready Texas - IDRA study points to the troubling effects of the state's new graduation requirements
- Classnotes Podcast Episode: Ready Texas Study of New Graduation Requirements
- ESSA Training Kit 5 - Career Awareness for College Planning

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College Preparation

Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2017-18 High School Attrition Improves by Two Points

by Roy L. Johnson, M.S.

If we are to both invest in our children's future and meet the demands of a job market that increasingly requires college-educated employees, we must ensure that students are college-ready and, at the very least, graduating from high school.

In IDRA's latest attrition study, the overall school holding power in the state improved by two points, but persistent gaps among major race-ethnicity groups continue. Attrition rates are an indicator of a school's holding power, or the ability to keep students enrolled in school and learning until they graduate.

In addition to key findings, IDRA's analysis predicts that, at its current pace, Texas will continue to range from 21 to 25 percent and not reach an attrition rate of zero until around 2036-37. The full study will be available soon on IDRA's web site.

Sign up for IDRA's email list to get an alert with the study is released.



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Still Making a Case for Algebra II

by Paula Johnson, Ph.D.

This article describes how Algebra II is a critical component of college-readiness, discusses the implications for policymakers and practitioners, and offers recommendations for teaching and learning. Research findings point to Algebra II as a component of preparing students for college, especially because many of these standards are algebra-related.



Texas stopped requiring Algebra II for high school graduates in 2014, but students should still be strongly encouraged to take the course voluntarily. As part of her research, Dr. Johnson sought input about Algebra and college readiness via social media. Most replies encouraged students to take Algebra II and to teach Algebra I in the eighth grade. Several people related their college success to taking Algebra II in high school.

A starting point is to again revisit education standards and high quality teaching, and we must acknowledge that students can be successful taking higher level math.

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Counselors Overwhelmed and Worried about Implementing Texas' New Graduation Requirements

IDRA Study Explores Counselor Concerns in Supporting Students for College Preparation

by Hector Bojorquez

In Texas, the important work of counselors in helping shape student academic paths has been affected by changes in the state's graduation requirements that went into effect in 2013-14 as determined in House Bill 5. As we reported in May, IDRA conducted a study, with funding from the Greater Texas Foundation, of HB5 implementation. We examined how educators, families and students are navigating implementation of the new graduation requirements and how they impact post-secondary preparation.



Part of the study specifically looked at how counselors are navigating the new requirements under HB5. Overall, counselors indicated that they were not confident that they were providing effective support for students. Though schools have provided information and training, counselors are frequently overwhelmed.

IDRA identified common themes from interviews with counselors, mostly related to implementation. A major concern, at the root of the interviews, was the overall purpose that endorsements serve and how they prepare students for post-secondary success.

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Expanding Career Awareness for College... Especially for First-timers

by Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.

Aurelio M. Montemayor introduces a new effort to help prospective college students and their families navigate the college experience and plan for their futures. Through workshops and meetings as part of IDRA's Education CAFE Network, a common request was to provide information about the professions available to youths attending college for the first time.



From there, Mr. Montemayor created an activity for workshop participants to explore a wide variety of careers in nine major categories (humanities, computer science and math, social science, art and design, engineering, business, education, communications and journalism, and physical and biological sciences).

The activity allowed participants to discover a range of jobs and their salaries, look up descriptions and responsibilities, and figure out what college classes would be suited to building the skills different professions require.

See the ESSA Training Kit 5 - Career Awareness for College Planning

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Classnotes Podcast Episodes on College Preparation

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Counting Dropouts - #62

Continuities with Lessons in Dropout Prevention - #63

Why Algebra II? - #133

Higher Math for All - #87

Ready Texas Study of New Graduation Requirements - #178

Teacher Adapts Curricula to Circumvent Institutional Discrimination - #183

The Power of Student Voices in Dropout Prevention - #125



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September 19, 2018
- Teacher Responsibilities in Supporting LGBTQ Students - Podcast Episode 185
August 16, 2018
- Teacher Adapts Curricula to Circumvent Institutional Discrimination - Podcast Episode 184
June 4, 2018
- Holding Back In-grade Retention - Podcast Episode 182
May 11, 2018
- Supporting Refugee Students - Podcast Episode 181
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- Growth Mindsets to Increase Achievement - Podcast Episode 180
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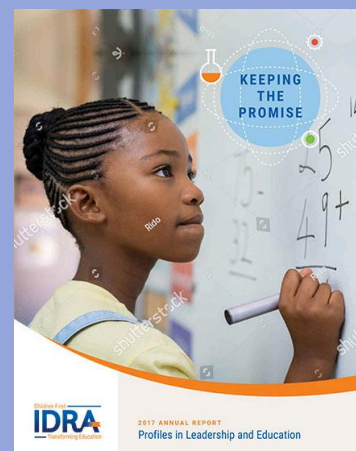
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IDRA Annual Report Available

Keeping the Promise - Profiles in Leadership and Education

IDRA's annual report for 2017, **Keeping the Promise: Profiles in Leadership and Education**, features leaders in education, family, community and youth - Jacquelyn Carter Thigpen; Alexander Yang; Gregory Rivers; Eva Carranza and her daughter Andrea; Linda Darling-Hammond; and Tery Medina.

The report tells how their commitment to keeping the promise of quality public education for all children has been woven into their paths and how they work with a community of partners and colleagues to keep this promise.



October 2018

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The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent, non-profit organization. Our mission is to achieve equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college. IDRA strengthens and transforms public education by providing dynamic training; useful research, evaluation, and frameworks for action; timely policy analyses; and innovative materials and programs.

We are committed to the IDRA valuing philosophy, respecting the knowledge and skills of the individuals we work with and build on the strengths of the students and parents in their schools.